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# University of Montana

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## MEDIA RELEASE

CSW  
December 12, 1985  
State and Weeklies  
Pic/Dailies  
YellRobe.rl

### UM SENIOR'S PLAY TO BE PROFESSIONALLY PRODUCED IN LOS ANGELES

MISSOULA --

William Yellow Robe Jr., a University of Montana senior majoring in drama and journalism, recently had his play "Sneaky" accepted for production by the professional Native American Theatre Ensemble of Los Angeles.

The Ensemble will fly Yellow Robe to Los Angeles Jan. 2 to help prepare for the production of the one-act play, which will be staged for eight nights in mid-January at the Intercity Cultural Community Center.

Yellow Robe says that Joy Hardjo, who taught Native American poetry at UM last year, recommended "Sneaky" to Hanay Geiogamah, executive producer of the Ensemble.

"Sneaky" is the tale of three brothers who remove their mother's body from a funeral parlor to give her a traditional Indian burial -- one lacking the sterility and hopelessness Yellow Robe perceives in modern burial rituals.

"More than anything else, it's a play about the need for taking care of each family member," he says. "It stresses family unity."

"Sneaky" was staged last May at UM's Masquer Theatre, and Yellow Robe has also transformed the story into a screenplay that will be filmed by UM graduate drama student Gordon Stabler.

Yellow Robe, a 25-year-old Assiniboiné Indian who hails from Wolf Point,

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YellRobe --add one

is not new to writing. He began creating mini-plays in the sixth grade and by the time he was in eighth grade was writing comedy. Since then, he has produced a variety of plays and short stories.

His story "The Burning of Uncle" appeared in a recent issue of "CutBank" magazine. The character named Skin will be the focus of a novel Yellow Robe is working on, tentatively titled "A Drum Song."

Yellow Robe is also writing a musical for the Montana Repertory Theatre about immigrant farmers in Montana at the turn of the century. Called "Harvest Time," the production will feature music by Mark Staples.

Yellow Robe, who has reported for several Montana newspapers, has come to prefer dramatic over journalistic writing. "Theater is more visual," he says. "You can really touch people, affect them for the rest of their lives. Everybody will remember Romeo and Juliet and Lady MacBeth."

Yellow Robe is also an avid actor. His roles in UM productions have ranged from Donny Dubrow in "American Buffalo" to Big Jule in "Guys and Dolls" to Baptista in "The Taming of the Shrew."

"I don't care whether my role is a big or small one, just as long as I'm working on stage," he says. "I once went three months without acting. I nearly went nuts."

Writing, rewriting, directing, acting and studying leave Yellow Robe little time for relaxation. "I don't get a lot of sleep," he says simply. "I miss a lot of movies and concerts."